

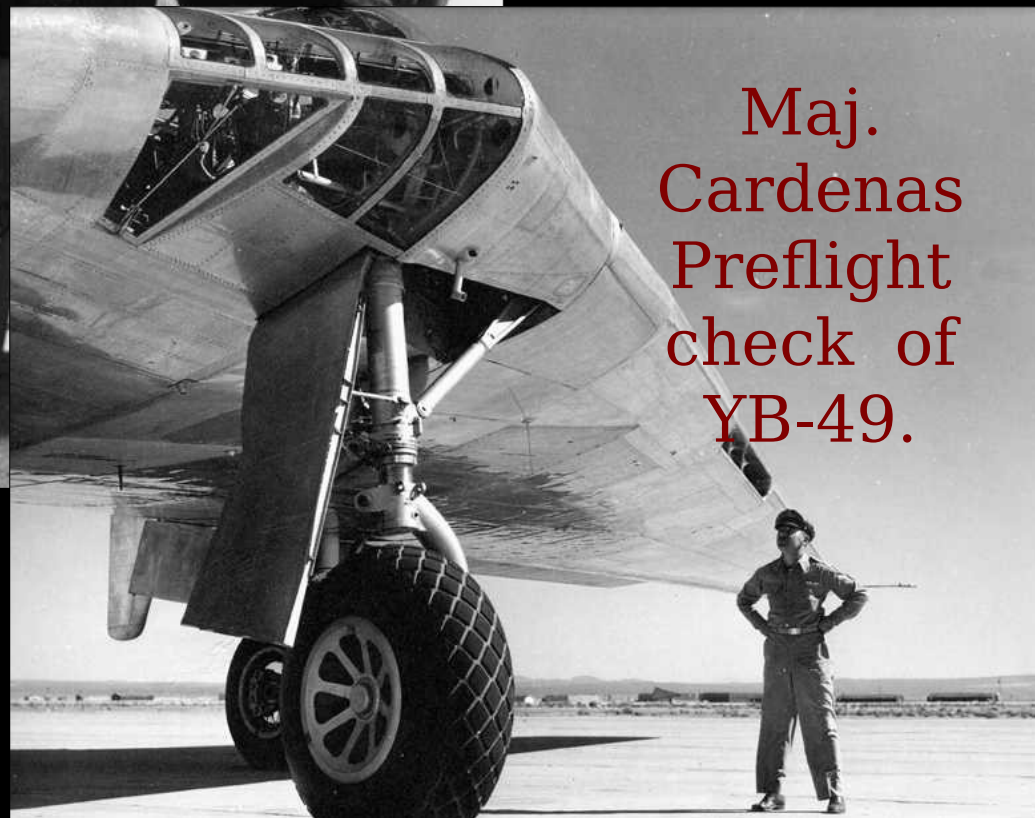
A Desert Stone

By Keith Fulton

Richard Schmidt Maj. Cardenas Capt. Edwards
Maj. Forbes



Maj.
Cardenas
Preflight
check of
YB-49.



Forbes at 50

09/12/16

Topics of Discussion

- How the stone was found
- Years of research
- Chance meeting
- Call to Forbes Field
- Meeting with Hazel Bartron
- Headline all crew
- Researching the past
- Returning the stone

Returning a stone Found in the desert October 17, 1997

- Tony Moore – X-Hunters
- Chris Sanders – Disney Director
- David Perry – DreamWorks Aviation

“The desert has claimed many a great eagle that soared from the runways of Edwards Air Force Base, but from time-to-time, what the desert takes, the desert returns.” Tony Moore

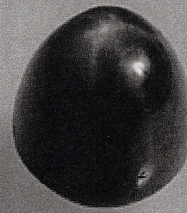
Finding the Stone

- Beginner's tour
 - ◆ Chuck Yeager's NF-104
 - ◆ YB-49 site

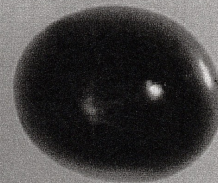
On the Tip of a Shovel

“I instinctively snatched it from the shovel, knowing that treasures can be lost as quickly as they are found”

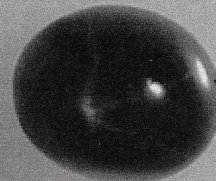
Tony Moore



Star Sapphire - Top view



*Another copy of the top view with 3
of the 6 star-arms visible.*



*Star Sapphire top view - side light
showing 3 of the six-armed star.*

09/12/16

Chris Sanders
Directed “Lilo and Stitch” for Disney

**David
Perry**

**DreamWor
ks Aviation**



Tony Moore

**Original
X-Hunter**

09/12/16

Years of Research

- ☐ Photos
- ☐ Accident Report
- ☐ Chance Meeting

Notifying Forbes Field, K

- Call to Capt Karl Fruendt
(former public relations officer)
- Send photos of stone
- Meeting with Hazel Bartron
- Presentation during Family Freedom Day air show

09/12/16

Agencies Contacted

- o Edwards AFB History Office
- o Air Force History Office Wright Patterson
- o Smithsonian Museum, Washington DC
- o Northrop Aircraft Corp



Topeka Shawnee County Library

- ✓ Found crew names with next of kin and home address listed
 - Maj. Daniel Forbes – Topeka,
KS
 - Capt. Glen Edwards – Lincoln, CA
 - Lt. Edward Swindell – Virginia Beach,
VA
 - Mr. Clare Leser – Joliet, IL
 - Mr. C. H. LaFountain – Hudson Falls,
NY

09/12/16

Other Contacts Made

- ❖ Virginia Beach Public Library
- ❖ Joliet Public Library
- ❖ Public Library in Glens Falls, NY
- ❖ Dan Ford Author of “Glen Edwards – Diary of a Bomber Pilot”
- ❖ Chris Sanders

First to Reply Joliet Public Library

- ❖ Sent copies of news articles
- ❖ First photo of Clare Leser
- ❖ Education Information – Aeronautical Engineering degree from Notre Dame
- Contacted officials from Notre Dame

Call to Henry Leser, Jr

- ❖ Joliet, IL
- ❖ Four boys
 - ❖ Henry – pilot
 - ❖ George
 - ❖ Leo – pilot
 - ❖ Clare – Aeronautical Engineer
- ❖ Mr. Leser asked for a letter stating all information I was requesting.

09/12/16

Angie Kindig of Notre Dame replied

- Sent yearbook photos and other information
- Now had usable photos for 4 of the 5 crew members: Maj. Forbes, Capt. Edwards, Lt. Swindle and Mr. Leser

Notre Dame University

[19 Dome]



Vice Pres., Sophomore Class
Economic Round Table

William J. Leavey, B.S. in C.
Jackson Heights, New York

Scholastic
Dome
Press Club
Vets Club
Knights of Columbus
Managers Association

Gene M. LaFave, B.S.
Green Bay, Wisconsin

Am. Chem. Soc.
Vets Club

Charles R. LeFevre, B.S. in B.A.
Jamestown, North Dakota

Irish Pennant (Bus. Mgr.)
N.R.O.T.C.
Univ. Band and Navy Band
Naval Ball Committee
Interhall Sports

John L. Lehr, B.S. in B.A.
Elwood, Indiana

Richard J. Leite, B.S. in Aero. Engr.
Fremont, Ohio

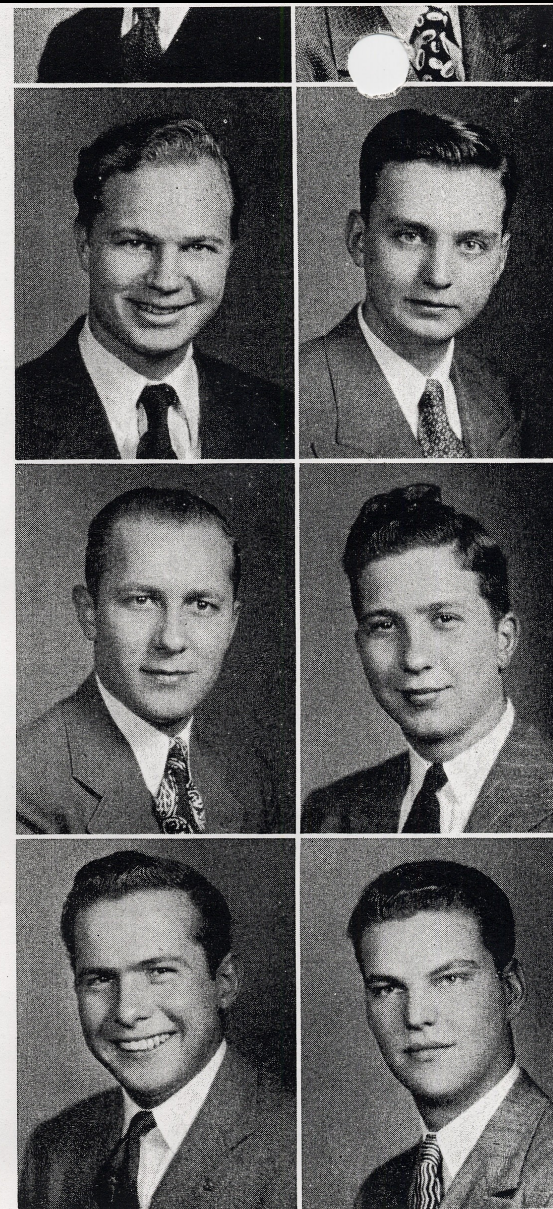
Aero. Engr. Club
Am. Soc. of Metals
Bach. of Naval Science
(June '45—Magna Cum Laude)

Richard C. Leon, B.S.
Mexico City, Mexico

Freshman Football
Interhall Football and Tennis
Propeller Club
Commerce Forum
Vets Club
Interhall Swimming

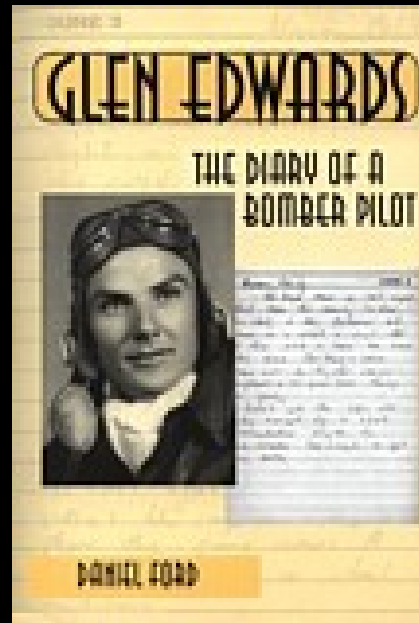
Clare C. Leser, B.S. in Aero. Engr.
Joliet, Illinois

Aero Club
Flying Club
Student Council
Band
Catholic Action Group
Interhall Basketball



Dan Ford

“Glen Edwards, The Diary of a Bomber Pilot”



09/12/16

Brigadier General Robert



09/12/16



09/12/16

Central Library, Virginia

Michelle Norton

News articles about Ed Swindell

09/12/16

Hello,

Coyote Log article

I just had to write and tell you how much I appreciate the web site you've put together. It is excellent. I found the link to the site "Wings Over Topeka" and viewed some of the videos. The in-flight refueling of the B-2 complete with radio communications was awesome. I've never seen anything like it. Ever. When I viewed the video YEAR IN REVIEW PROGRAM, I have to admit, it brought tears to my eyes. I had to call the rest of the family in to show them the video because I thought it was so good. It is a first class presentation and reflects directly on the Kansas ANG unit. Just fantastic. With the events that have taken place over the last year, I can understand why many of the ANG units have pulled down their web sites and limited their contact with the public. It is so good to see your site up on the internet. It makes the viewer feel good and reassured. That you ARE there and doing the job and doing it very well. You make a statement. Positive and confident. Thanks for putting it up and keeping it up on the web. It is appreciated.

The only reason I found the web page was because I was looking for information on the unit. One of your tankers "Wiley-81" towed some Cape Cod F-15s back into Otis ANG Base, Falmouth, Mass today. I believe the NORAD duty ANG F-15s were returning from Key West, Florida. A friend who lives down there (and saw your tanker land) asked if I knew anything about the unit, so I went hunting on the web for info. I was very surprised at what I found. After seeing your "Year In Review Program" video, I was touched. Perhaps you don't get a lot of feedback from the public or maybe you do, I don't know. I can tell you EVERYONE I know appreciates the hard work and long hours away from family you've spent to protect and serve our great nation. As the song in the video said.... You are the mountain. And we look up to and count on that mountain every day. You won't let us down I know.

Best Regards,

09/12/16
Larry Fowler, Glens Falls, NY

Larry Fowler

- Willing to help find information

Crandall Public Library Glens Falls, NY

Chas. H. LaFountain, Hudson Falls, Killed in Crash of Flying Wing Near Muroc Air Base, California

A Hudson Falls man was aboard the big eight-engine jet-propelled flying wing bomber which crashed Saturday in the desert near the Muroc Air Base in California, killing the crew of five.

He was Charles H. LaFountain, 22, son of Mr. and Mrs. Leo LaFountain, 11 Warren Street. An ensign in the U. S. Naval Reserve, he was an aeronautical engineer, having been graduated from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Troy, June 24, 1946, under the Navy V-12 program. He was also a graduate of Hudson Falls High School, Class of 1943, and a member of the Methodist Church of Hudson Falls.

Besides his parents, LaFountain is survived by a sister, Mrs. Joseph A. LaCarte, and a niece, Cheryl LaCarte, both of Hudson Falls, and his grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Marshall LaFountain of Lake Luzerne. His body will be brought home.

The plane, one of the Air Forces five new flying wings, and capable of traveling almost as fast as sound, plunged into the ground 10 miles northwest of the desert base while on a test flight. Cause of the crash has not been determined.

According to the Associated Press, the ill-fated ship was described by its makers as the fastest and most powerful bomber in the world. Nothing but scattered and burned debris remained of it yesterday on the desert.

Air Force officers said there had been no radio message that the plane was in trouble before the crash occurred.

Col. J. C. Moore, acting post commandant at Muroc Field, said the bomber was on a routine test flight from the field to Mojave, Calif.



CHARLES H. LA FOUNTAIN

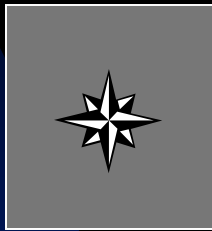
He said the plane had been in the air about an hour.

Dale C. Wilson of Alton, Ill., who was driving on a nearby highway, told sheriff's officers the plane seemed to explode and then plunged downward, cutting a wide swath through the sagebrush and greasewood.

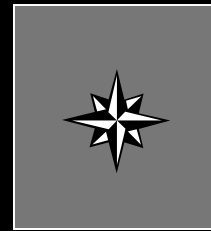
Air Force spokesmen said the plane had "run into difficulties" but that it would be several days before anything more could be told.

Fifteen of the tail-less flying wings, each weighing 44 tons and with a wingspread of 172 feet, were ordered built by Northrop Aircraft, Inc. Five have already been delivered to Muroc. Saturday's crash was the first for a flying wing.

- Sent information
- Received photograph of 5th crewmember

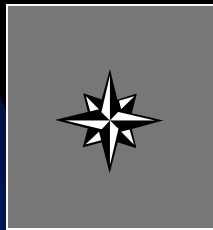


chlaountain_page2



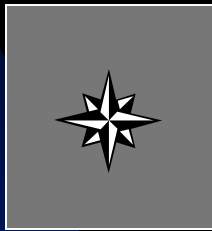
chlaountain_page1

09/12/16

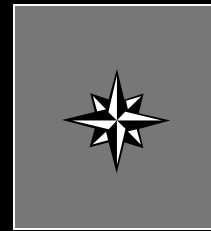


chlaountain_page1

09/12/16

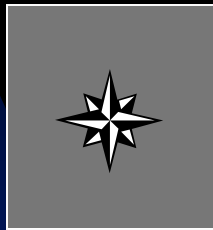


chlafountain_page2



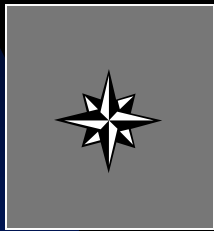
chlafountain_page1

09/12/16

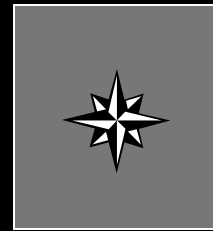


chlaountain_page1

09/12/16



chlaountain_page2



chlaountain_page1

09/12/16

Page 1 of Funeral Home notes

REPORT OF DEATH *Munroe Calif.*

1 Place of Death *Munroe Air Field*

2 Usual Residence of Deceased *11 Power Avenue St*

2a Citizen of Foreign Country *no.* *Heed Falls*

3 Full Name of Deceased *Chas. H. La Fountain*

4a Social Security No. *132-22-0537*

4b If Veteran, Name War *World War II*

5 Sex *Male* 6 Color or Race *White*

7 Single, Married, Widowed, or Divorced *Single*

8 If Married, Widowed, or Divorced,
Name of Husband (or) Wife *—*

Age of Husband (or) Wife, if Alive *—*

9 Date of Birth *June 12 1925*
Month Day Year

10 Age *22*
Years Months Days

11 Usual Occupation *Aeronautical Engineer*

12 Industry or Business *—*

13 Birthplace *Pearlman* (State or Country) *N.Y.*

14 Father's Name *Leo La Fountain*

15 Father's Birthplace *Cornith N.Y.*

16 Mother's Maiden Name *Glady Taylor*

17 Mother's Birthplace *Glenn Falls*

18 Informant *—*

19 Address *Pearlman*

20 Buried at *Heed Falls Cem.* Date *June 12 1948*

21 Certificate Filed with Registrar *5-1948*

22 Date of Death *June 12 1948*

23 Cause of Death *Killed in Plane Crash*

24 Certified by *—* M. D.
Medical Attendant

☒ This stub will not be received as a certificate of death.

09/12/16



607 Belmont Park North
Dayton 5 Ohio.

Phone Fulton 9933

C. E. Gray of Dayton Ohio

Called Rev Benedict.

Phone Osborne 8-4562

Body is at Pierce Bros Funeral
Home at Van Nuys Calif.

Apprentice Seaman S V 12

26 S N. R. 20. enlisted 8/16/43

d-dec. 6/27/46 800-75-12

Place Separation USN Personnel

Center Sida Beach Long Island N.Y.

Recorded Wash Co. Clerk Off

P24 - Book 10

1948-6-35
1925-6-12
22-11-23

Page 2
of Funeral
Home no

09/12/16

Hi Keith,

I went back and re-read your email. I have to admit I browsed it only quickly in my haste to send you the obit on Charles LaFountain. I couldn't figure out what you were talking about.

WOW! I am truly surprised by your find, especially with my last name on the top of the one sheet.

Then I re-read it again.... What is he talking about???? I scrolled down the page to where the pictures were and it hit me. I said to myself.... oh my God. "Call Fulton". It was there in the death report all the time.

When I attached those two jpgs, the second one appeared first on the email header. Number 2. I didn't want you to see that one first, so I deleted the second and then reattached it. So it would be added last and viewed last. That way when you opened it, number one would open first, then the second page. But when I reattached it (I swear to God), it went right back to the first position. I didn't think much of it and said,, he'll figure it out. Second page is first and the first page is second. Either way... it's

09/12/16

LaFountain Family Found

- Sept 19, 2002
- Niece Cheryl Dodds in CO
- Brother Charles was named for his uncle

Rensselaer Polytechnic

Charles LaFountain's college information

Yearbook photos

09/12/16

LEON JULES KAHN, E.E.
108 Seaman Avenue Rockville Center, N. Y.
Born September 7, 1922; Prepared at South Side High School; Activities at RPI, WHAZ Staff, Radio Club, Phi Sigma Delta Fraternity; Civilian.

ETHEL JOCELYN KATZ, C.E.
171 Manhattan Avenue Bridgeport, Conn.
Born April 1, 1927; Prepared at Central High School; Activities at RPI, Poly Assoc. Board, Sec. of Women's Org., S.V.R., A.S.C.E.; Civilian.

WILLIAM ARTHUR KELLY, M.E.
7161 North 21st Street Philadelphia, Penna.
Born December 18, 1921; Prepared at Central High School; Transferred from Ohio Wesleyan University; Activities at RPI, Bilgers Club, Intramural Basketball; Theta Xi Fraternity; USNR ROTC.

JOSEPH LOUIS KRAHULA, M.E.
1764 Crane Street Schenectady, N. Y.
Born July 22, 1923; Prepared at Mount Pleasant High School; Activities at RPI, A.S.M.E., Pi Tau Sigma, Tau Beta Pi; Civilian.

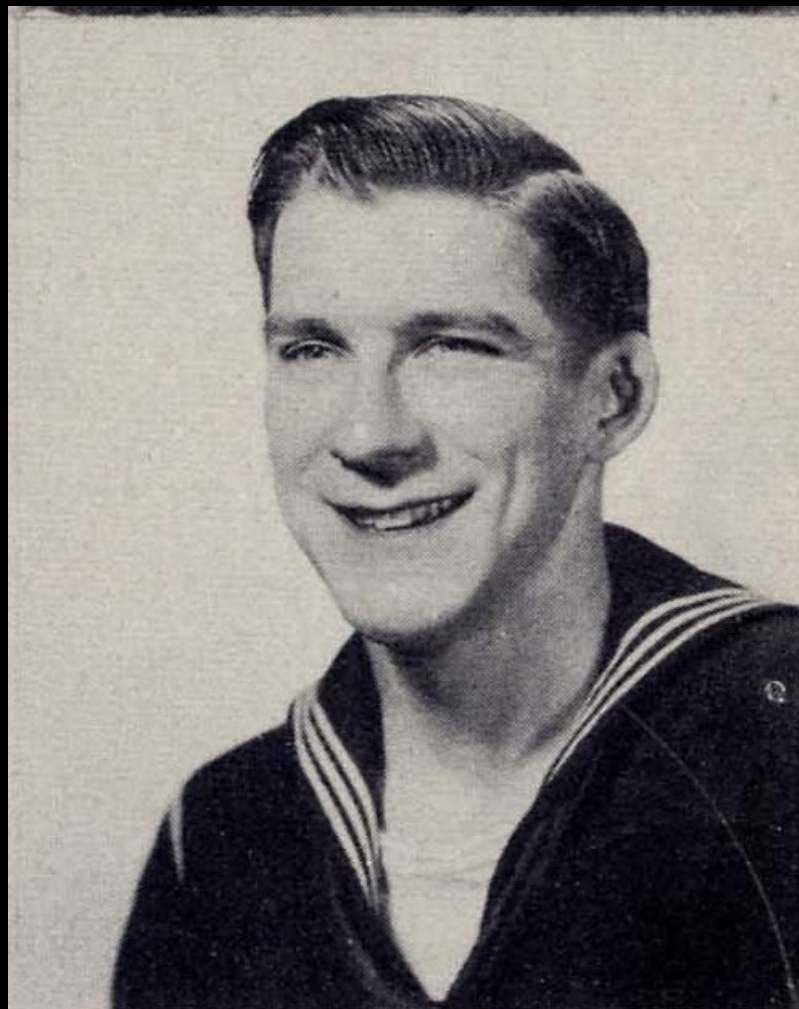
ELIZABETH MARGARET KRIEGSMANN, A.E.
717 Oakridge Drive Jackson, Mich.
Born April 1, 1924; Prepared at Jackson High School; Transferred from Principia College; Activities at RPI, RPI Players, L.A.S., Track, Tennis, Football, Tennis, Tennis, Activities at other college, Pi Delta Kappa, Women's Organization; Civilian.

CHARLES H. LAFOUNTAIN, A.E.
11 Warren Street Hudson Falls, N. Y.
Born June 12, 1921; Prepared at Hudson Falls High School; Transferred from Union College; Activities at RPI, Transit Board, L.A.S., Band, Symphony Orchestra, Serenaders; Activities at other college, Band, Blue Jacket; USNR V-12.

PETER LAHANA, E.E.
22-12 — 24th Street Astoria, Long Island City, N. Y.
Born October 24, 1923; Prepared at Stuyvesant High School; Transferred from C.C.N.Y.; Activities at RPI, Vice-Pres. A-1 Club, I.C.A., Tau Beta Pi, A.I.E.E., Finance Officer Veterans Administration; Activities at other college, A.I.E.E.; Phi Mu Delta Fraternity; Civilian.

WALTER LAMISHKA, M.E.
626 East 11th Street New York, N. Y.
Born February 2, 1926; Prepared at Yonkers High School; Transferred from West Michigan College; Activities at other college, Varsity Basketball; USNR ROTC.

US Navy V-12 Program



CHARLES H. LAFOUNTAIN, A.E.

11 Warren Street

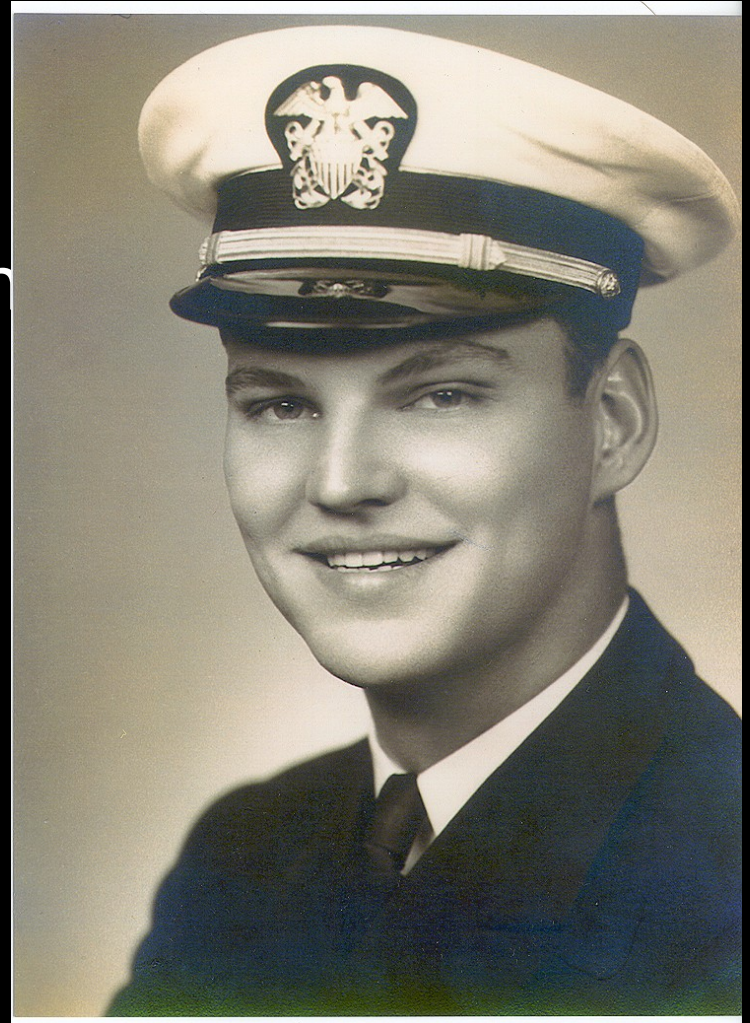
Hudson Falls, N. Y.

Born June 12, 1925; Prepared at Hudson Falls High School; Transferred from Union College; Activities at RPI, *Transit* Board, I.Ae.S., Band, Symphony Orchestra, Serenaders; Activities at other college, Band, Blue Jackets; USNR V-12.

09/17/20

Received letter from Geo

Contained photo of brother



09/12/16

Family's unable to attend Air Show

- George and Deloris Leser
- Cheryl and Bill Dodds

LaFountain Family Archives

- Christine Miller, Cheryl Dodds' daughter had family archives
- Letter written to family by Richard Schmidt, Charles' roommate

“All of us who worked and played with him were gladdened by his jovial spirit and winning smile. His kindness toward all humanity was often exemplified by his exceptional generosity to humanitarian causes as the Red Cross, Crippled Children's Aid, etc...” Richard Schmidt



09/12/16

Change of Plans

- Sept 20, 2002, just 8 days before the presentation - Received two telephone calls within an hour.
- George and Deloris Leser can attend - would be driving in from Eau Clair, Wisconsin.
- Cheryl and Bill Dodds can also attend - would arrive in Topeka the day before.

Reunion?

- First time any of the families have met!
- Contact Edwards' family
- Still trying to find Swindell's family

Swindell Family Found

- Larry Fowler come through again!
- Sept 25th – Daughter Carol Lynn Miller in Warsaw, NC
- Was 2 years old when her father was killed

Swindell Family Photos



has reached the conclusion
that it would be desirable that the
people in the different
should not be free in making
themselves the political
of the end restrictions which
take them to games show
of the small representative
are connected with the
high requirements of some
which should and which of
will enable them to ac-
the representative system
it is the states will wish
to have a representative with
which will allow all the
possibilities to achieve an even
an economic system.
The Federal Constitution
has the Congress have
the government to their gov-
ment that the military power
"It held a brief meeting
the understanding of the
the time in Germany. At the
held the business conference
the first meeting to convene in
the assembly in order to
the constitution for the first
to the constituent as
be chosen to each of
in accordance with the
regulations set by the
senator Walter Clark, secretary, and
the legislative bodies
M. H. HAYMAN, Jr., also of Virginia,
Brady and a two-year-old daughter,
Carol Lynn.



Cadet Ed Swindell
1944



Carol Lynn
Swindell

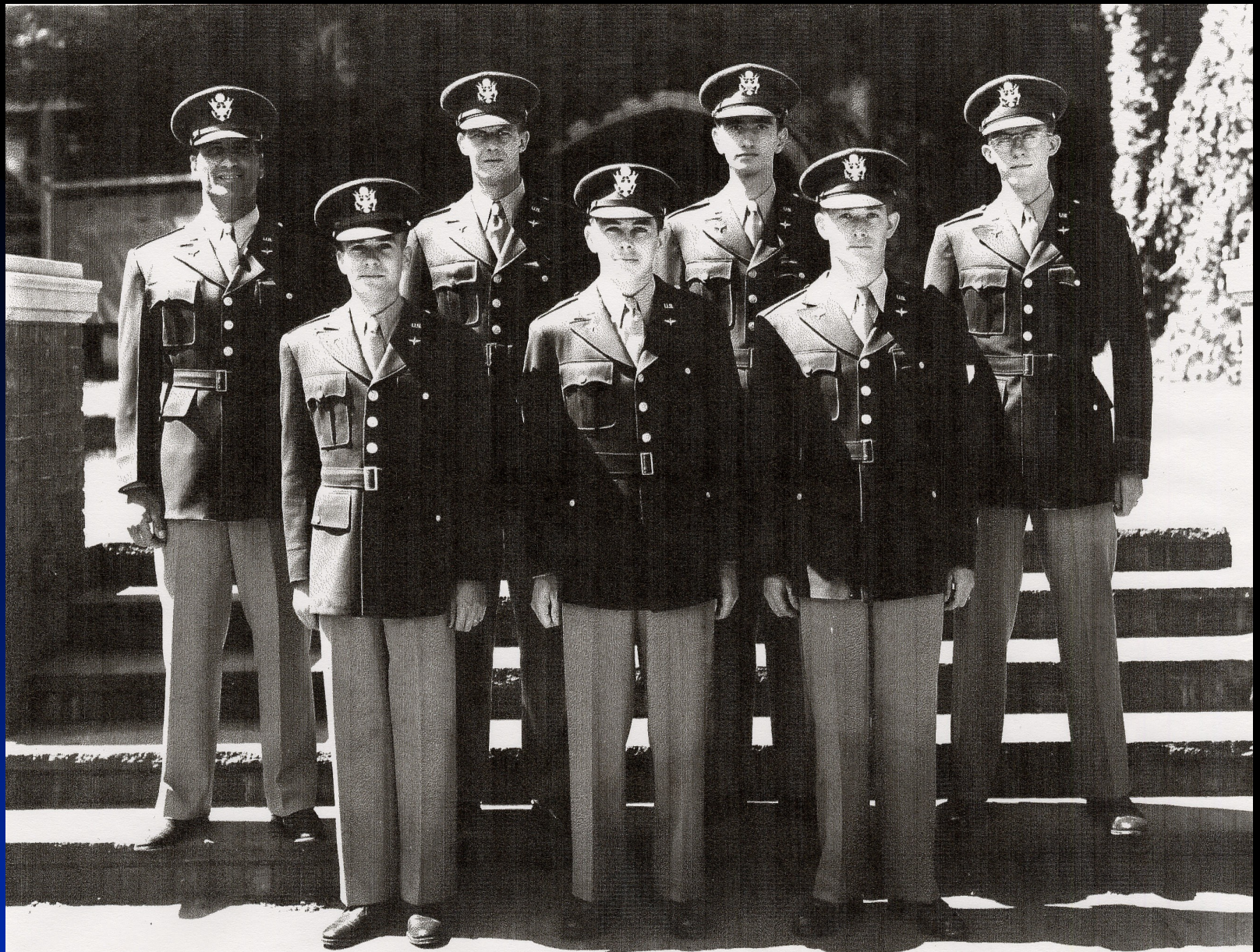


09/12/16

Carol Lynn Wanting to Attend

- Tribute to her father
- Unit able to provide airline ticket
- Late for flight

09/12/16



Sept 14, 1944
YALE TECH School

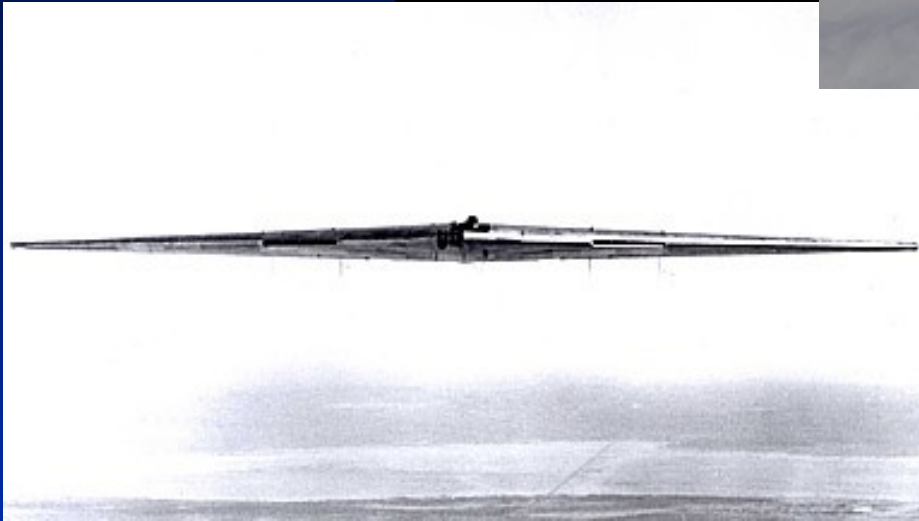
↖
E L Swindell



09/12/10



09/12/16



09/12/16



05/12/10



09/12/16



**YB- 49 "Flying Wing" Serial Number 42- 102368
Test flight 5 Jun 1948**

Dedicated in memory of the crew who perished on this flight

Maj. Daniel H. Forbes, Jr.	Test Pilot
Capt. Glen W. Edwards	Test Pilot / Aeronautical Engineer
Lt. Edward L. Swindell	Flight Engineer
Mr. Clare C. Leser	Civilian Aeronautical Engineer
Mr. Charles H. LaFountain	Civilian Aeronautical Engineer

The sapphire stone belonged to Maj Daniel Forbes, Jr. found
at the crash site of the YB-49 in the Southern California Desert
on 17 Oct 1997 by the *"X- Hunters"*

Tony Moore	Public Relations, NASA Dryden Facility Edwards AFB, CA
Chris Sanders	Director, Walt Disney Feature Animation Burbank, CA
David Parry	Flight Engineer, DreamWorks Burbank, CA

The stone was returned to Maj. Forbes' widow Hazel Bartron on 28 September 2002
during the Family Freedom Dry Air Show. Mrs. Bartron dedicated it to the
entire crew who perished.



09/12/16

THE CREW OF YB-49 42-102368



Daniel H.
Forbes



Glen W.
Edwards



Edward L.
Swindell



Charles H.
LaFountain



Clare C.
Leser

www.kansascoyotes.com

09/12/16